:-: The Swift Six :-:

BY RING W. LARDNER

Illustrated by Fontaine Fox.

Allison, Ill. Jan. 1,

DEAR BROTHER CHARLEY. Well Charley the New Yrs. is starting in and I feel some how like its going to be a lucky yr. for me and Im going to try and do my best to make it lucky. I bet they wont be no throwing away money this yr. like they was last yr. and by a yr. from now I wont have no moregage hanging on my head but will have the house all payed for and every thing clear and a little money in the bank besides.

Between you and I Charley theys some money in the bank right now now and believe me thats where she going to stay. I got something over $600.00 salted away and they wont be another payment on the house dew till July and nothing to pay between then and now but regular expenses that a man can pay out of your salary if you dont make a monkey out of yourself. Thats what Im going to do this yr. Charley is live close and not toss my money a round like it was a drunkard sailor.

In the 1st. place Im going to cut down on smoking because I figgure where I smoke too much and when a man smokes as much as I been in the habit you get up in the A. M. feeling like a tramp and cough like you was going to loose a lung. And Im going to try and make my cloths last as long is theyll hold together and if I play cards it will be jest for fun and not a cent a pt. or nothing like that.

The $600.00 thats in the bank is what Grace give me to keep for her and she says she was scarred to trust herself with that amt. in her own name or she would be blowing it in for cloths. I never seen the woman yet that could hold on to a chunk of money but they got to throw it to the birds as soon is they get there hands on it. So Grace used good judgment turning it over to me and they couldn't no body get it away from me with a crow bar unlest its to pay honest debts or some thing.

Of course the $600.00 was part of Graces berthday present from her old man and she can do what she please with it but she turning it over to me looks like she had better sence about money than the 1st. few yrs. we was married.

Happy New yr. and prosterity to you and Mary.

Your Bro. F. A. GROSS.

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Allison, Ill. Jan. 22.

BROTHER CHARLEY. Well Charley I was wandering how long it would take before Grace begin iching for the little hunk of money she give me to keep for her and its a good thing I got it where she cant touch it or she would be as clean is a whistle in the side of a month.

When I come home last night she was all exited and I ast her what

FRED A. GROSS, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF DETECTIVES, WHO GAVE UP HIS FLAT IN CHICAGO TO BUILD A HOME IN THE SUBURBS, ACQUIRES A CAR.

was the idear and she says she had some thing to tell me but she was scarred to tell me so I told her to hurry up and get it off of her chest.

So what do you think she sprung on me Charley. She says she had been down on Wabash ave. with Mrs. Dutton and walked passed a piano store and seen a piano in the window that was advertised to sell for $110.00 and the reglar price of that kind of a piano was $250.00. But they was selling this 1 cheap because some body had ordered it and made a paymunt and had it sent out to there house and then decided they dident want it and sent it back. So Grace says she wanted to buy it.

Well I says if them other people dident want it they was probily some thing the matter with it and may be it was off the key. No she says it was O. K. because Mrs. Dutton set down and tride it. So I says I dont want Mrs. Dutton hanging a round the house all the wile and they aint niether I or you or the babys that can play a piano so what good would it be to us. So she says she or the babys could lern on it. Yes I says you got a lot of time to lern a piano and as far is the babys is concerned the 1st. thing I want them to learn is sleep nights and get there mouth located at table.

Well she says supose they wasent no body to play it it would look good in the liveing rm. All right I says I know where I can get a man down town to paint 1 on the wall for $20.00.

So she says she knowed I would act that way about it and I says Yes and your pretty lucky to have a husband thats got some thing under there hat besides scalp deceases.

So she left the rm. without saying nothing and thought I would feel sorry for her and chase after her and tell her she could buy her old piano and higher a forner to come out evry night and play it but I wasent going to fall for no sob stuff and when I says I would keep her money for her I ment I would keep it and not throw it away on junk we cant aford let alone got no use for it.

Well Charley tomorrow Im going up to the Coliseum to the automobile show and Id rather lay a round headquarters but I promised Alec Welsh Id go along with him.

Regards to Mary.

Your Bro. F. A. GROSS.

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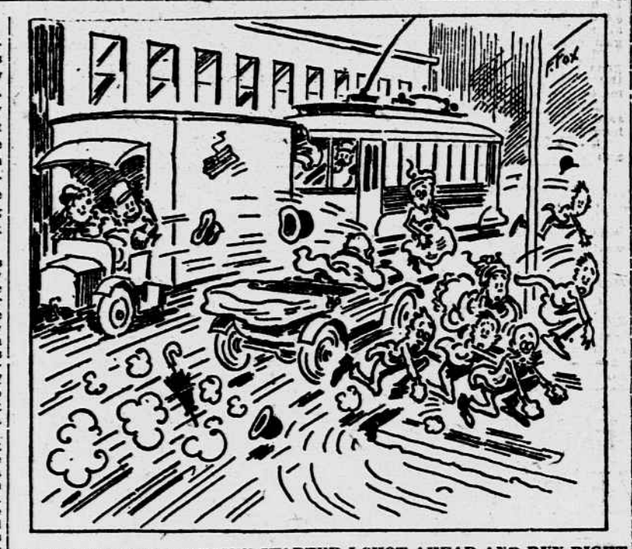
Allison, Ill., Jan. 24.

DEAR CHARLEY. Well Charley I was up to the automobile show yesterday and the shows the prettiest sight I seen in a long wile and when I come home I tride to get Grace to go with me some night and see the show but shes still sore yet on acct. of me not leaveing her throw her money away on a piano.

I dident have no idear that you could buy a car as cheap as they got them for sale now and you can get a big size 5 passenger car and not no flivver niether for $550. It would be pretty soft to drive to town and back every day in your car and not half to patternize them suburban trains where your lucky to find rm. enough for your ft. to stand on let alone rm. enough to set down unlest you starve your self for a few months 1st.

Alec says it aint no trick at all to lern to drive and hes got a car that holds 7 passengers and never had no trouble with it and it dont 6ost him hardley nothing for gasoline and new tires and etc. and its only the grate big heavy cars that costs money to run them and of coarse I couldent aford 1 of them big boys. I wisht though that Grace wasent such a old grand mother about leting loose of a little money on pleasure and I would certainly invest in 1 of them light cars that dont cost hardley nothing



"THE MINUTE THE ENGINE STARTED I SHOT AHEAD AND RUN RIGHT AT A CROWD OF PEOPLE THAT WAS CROSSING THE STREET."

in the 1st place and practically no keep up.

Well Charley it seems like a crime to not take advantage of the price you can get goods cars for now and I wisht I was in a position where I coud blow myself to 1 but I dont believe in a man spending money for what you cant aford and liveing behind your means and a mans 1st. duty is pay your debts.

Regards to Mary.

Your Brother,

FRED A. GROSS.

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Allison, Ill., Jan. 27.

BRO. CHARLEY. Well Charley old boy I got grate news for you. Im a full fledg motorist now. What do you think of that Charley only of coarse I aint got no car yet but I made a paymunt on it all ready and took a driveing lesson and I could drive O. K. right now only these cars like the kind I bought is such a bargain that every bodys went crazy over them and the co. is behind there orders and cant deliver without you give them a little time. But they promised me mine by the middle of next wk.

I guess you dont know much about cars Charley but you must of herd of the kind I got. Its a Swift Six and the name tells you how fast it can go but you wouldent need no name to tell you if you seen it spin up and down Mich. ave. The Six means 6 passengers it will hold but I dont only want rm. for 1 and Grace and the kids because Im not going to take no cheap skate along that cant aford cars of there own.

The price of the car is $550 fob Detroit and that means its made up to Detroit and if you buy it there you got to pay for the freight to get it here but I wasent suker enough to go up to Detroit and buy 1 when they had them for sale right in Chi. I payed $490.00 down and I don't half to pay the rest till I get the car and I guess I can rake up $60.00 some wheres and I aint like the man that aint got freinds that will come acrost for them in a pinch. I could of payed for the hole thing at once only for Grace makeing a holler and I had to leave her have her way this time or she would of whinned a round the house till we was all deef.

It was yesterday I went up to the show on acct. of haveing to find a fellow and I figgured thats where he would probily be and I made the deal for the car there and I says I was sure of takeing it only 1st. I thought I better ask my wife to come down and look at it to see weather the color sutted her O. K. and etc. So I come home and I says Well Grace you cant call me no Sherlock no more and I got a big surprise for you so she says Did you buy me that piano. So in the stead of me answering I hailed a pitcher of the car out of my pocket and showed it to her and I says how would you like to ride in that. So she says she would rather ride in a limosene this time of yr. So I says Yes but we cant aford no limosene. So she says pitchers of limosenes dont cost no more then any other kind of pitchers uniest there in gold frames. So I says Yes but I got some thing more then a pitcher of this baby. I bought the car today.

At 1st. she thought I was jokeing but I finely convinced her and she says whose going to pay for it and I says the price aint only $550 and we got $600 in the bank. Yes, she says, but who does the money bellong to. I says You give it to me to keep untill I seen some thing that we needed and was worth buying. So then she got sarcastical. So she says No I turned

"THEN I WENT TO THE HOUSE AND SET ON THE KITCHEN STOVE TILL MY LEGS WAS SO AS I COULD STAND UP."

the money over to you so as we wouldent be worried about it more then a wk. or 2 because it would keep me awake nights thinking about it but if you had it we would be sure to be broke again as soon is you see some thing that cost the hole amt. weather it was $600.00 dollars worth of fresh eggs or a set of dimond buttons for your under shirt. So I says This here car aint going to cost the hole $600 but we will still have $50 yet to do what ever we please with it or leave it lay. So she says Yes on $50.00 we can take a trip to Japan China or save up the intrest for 10 yrs. and buy a evening paper.

So I got disgusted with how she was carring on so I says all right keep your old money and be a miser so she says I will tell you what I will do I will leave you buy me that piano tomorrow and you can take whats left of of the $600.00 and spend it on the car.

So today she met me down town and we bought the piano and payed $110.00 mesh for it and then I took her out to the Coliseum and showed her the Swift Six and of coarse when she seen it she couldent help from likeing it and they couldent no body that seen it and seen what a bargain it is when you consider the price we are getting it at.

Its fixed so you dont half to turn no crank to start the engine running but jess press your ft. on a peddle and its got red wheels and a regiar set of tools under the front seat so a man can do all your fixing but they claim it dont hardley ever need nothing done to it and the way it is now theys a top on it but you can take the top down on a nice day and 1 man can put it up or put it down and theys a tank to hold gasoline so you dont half to stop at every garrage and buy some more and cushions on the both seats and every thing sick and spand.

Well Charley I cant hardley wait untill the middle of next wk. but tomorrow Im going to take an other lesson driveing and then I will be ready to run her to hellangone as soon is they got 1 to spare for me. Dont you wisht you was in my shoes Charley but never mind and when you and Mary get out here next time I will ride you till the cows come home.

Regards to Mary.

Your Brother,

F. A. GROSS, motorist.

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Allison, Ill., February 15.

CHARLEY. Well Charley they promised I was to have my car the 3 or 4 of Feb. and says they would take care of me 1st. before they filled any other orders and here it is 2 wks. late and not no sine of a car and the way it looks like to me there filling other orders in alphabet order and begun at the Zes.

But theys 1 thing sure that Im makeing them birds give me plenty of driveing lessons and Im getting so now I can go any wheres without the man telling me nothing and he says I picked it up quicker than any body he ever seen and the funny part is that Grace thinks I will half to start takeing lessons after I get the car and she dont know that all ready I can drive as good is any body so when the car gets here I will drive it out home that night and she will be the most surprised woman in the world.

Well Charley I supose I should ought to be thankful that I aint running up no gasoline bills but Id be willing to put a little bread and butter in John Ds mouth if theyd give me some thing to use gasoline for besides takeing gravey spots out of my heavy overcoat.

My kindest to Mary.

Your Brother. F. A. GROSS.

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Allison, Ill. March 3.

BRO. CHARLEY. Well Charley if you was here tonight I could give you a little ride and I wisht you was here so as I could have a excuse to go out and ride a little myself but I dont dare go out alone because Grace would feel bad and I wisht Id called her up from down town when I knowed the car was here and then she wouldent of left the girl that stays with the children go over to the dutch church to a dance but I wanted to surprise Grace so she dident know what was comeing off so she left the girl go and now we got to stay in ourself and of course its a pretty cold night to drive down about zero or a little better but I wouldent care how cold it was if I could jest get a hold of that wheel.

They called me up as soon as I got back from lunch today and told me my car was in town and ast the chief to leave me beat it for the P. M. and I got there and was going to take her right home but when I give them the $60.00 that I borried off of the chief to pay the bal. what I owed they says it would be $200.00 dollars more. I ast what for and they says to pay for the freight from Detroit to Chi. So I says I bought the car in Chi and not in no Detroit or no other place. So they says Yes but the cars made in Detroit and when a man in Chi gets 1 he pays the freight. So I says Yes and stamps is made in Washington but they cost 2 cts. weather you buy them here or there so we argude back and 4th. and they says I couldent have the car unlest I payed for the freight and I finely got tired of argueing and ast them if theyd leave me take the car and they could charge the freight to me and Id pay it next month and they says that was O. K. So then they ast me did I want a extra tire so I says yes and they hung 1 on the back of the car and the man says that would be $16.00 more so I says they coud take it right off again so by the time I finely got started it was dark and I hadent never handled a car in the dark before but I got along great but my hands got pretty near froze.

I wasent thinking when I got to the house and I run right passed and I forgot for a min. how to back up so I run a round the blk. and the 2d. time I stopped O. K. in front of the house and then I tuted the horn and that was for Grace to come out but she was puting the kids to bed and so I finely got out of the car and went in and it was 7:30 and Grace heard me open the door and she come downstares. Well she says what are you getting home this time of night for. So I told her to come out in front and Id show her. So she come to the door and seen the lights on the car and she was so excited she couldent hardly talk and then she says I would half to take her for a ride before I ett supper or done anything so I was going to take her and she happened to think about the girl not being there so she couldent go and she was about ready to cry but I told her she should run out and set in the car a min. so she did and she dident set there only a min. on acct. of how cold it was.

But she was tickled to death when

"I'M MAKING THEM BIRDS GIVE ME PLENTY OF DRIVING LESSONS."

she seen we realy had our car and she couldent hardley beleive I knowed how to run it and she says I must lay off tomorrow and I and her and the babys and all of us would have a ride 1st. thing in the A. M. So Im going to give them a ride 1st. before I go down town to the office.

While we was eating supper Grace ast me where was I going to keep the car. Well Charley thats the 1st. time I thought about that and of coarse a man coulent leave it out all night in a blizzard or rain storm or the seats would get spoiled. So it looks like I would half to build me a garrage and maybe spend another $150.00 on that but they aint no hurry about it because I can leave her standout on clear nights for a wile and if it look like its going to storm I can take it down to the town garrage. Grace says it might may be rain or snow tonight and spoil the seats but I looked at the sky and they isent a cloud in sight and besides 2 above zero is to cold for rain or snow either 1 so every thing is safe for to nite.

Well Charley I must get up early in the A. M. and take the family rideing and I wisht you was here to go with us. O you Swift Six.

Regards to Mary.

Your Bro. FRED GROSS.

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Allison. Ill. March 5.

DEAR CHARLEY. Well Charley the cars down to the town garrage here in Allison and Grace ain't had a ride in it yet and the man says it will be O. K. tomorrow A. M. There fixing up the batery now so as the self starter will work and I would of took it in to town and made the Swift people fix it free for nothing only I called them up and told them about it and they says they was so busy they couldent do it this wk.

The batery died on me when I was trying to start her yesterday A. M. and I made a mistake leaveing her out the doors in cold weather like it was but how did I know what would happen. I guess they think a man should ought to know all about a car if he seen I before or dident see 1 before.

Well Charley the night I left her stand out all night the engine froze up and it took the garrage man pretty near 2 hrs. to get her runing again. You see when I 1st. went out there in the A. M. and tride to work the self starting peddle it dident do nothing so I was afrade I wasent pressing hard enough so I give her all the weight I got and nothing doing and finely they wasent even no more noise when I pressed on the peddle and I pressed and pressed for a ½ hr. and then I went in the house and set on the kitchen stove till my legs was so as I could stand up and then I called up the chief and ast him to leave me stay home and he says nothing doing I would half to come down so then I called up the garrage and they sent there man over and he seen that the thing was froze up and I stayed there and helped him as long is I could and then I had to go and now there chargeing the baterys up because it seems like I done wrong standing on the peddle so hard and besides they aint nothing a garrage can do as good as it can charge.

And today wile I was down town Grace called up from home and says I would have to buy a couple robes to help keep the kids warm in the car and I ast her what was the matter with useing blankets off of the bed and she says all right go ahead and use them but I wont ride with you. So it cost me $11.00 for the 2 cheapest blankets I could get a hold of and the next thing is build a garrage because the garrage man says the car will freeze up every night I leave it out the doors and if you keep your car in the town garrage its $10.00 per mo.

If it dont cost nothing for the keep up of this car Charley Im glad I dident get one of them big babys.

Kindest to Mary and yourself.

Your Bro. F. A. GROSS.

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Allison, Ill., March 9.

DEAR Charley: Give me what this here Swift Six has cost me all ready Charley and I will sell it to you fob Chicago and no questions ast.

Im staying home this A. M. and Grace called the chief up and told him I was sick and when she told him that she wasent springing no automobile story but she was telling him the truth.

After the garrage had a hold of the car fixing it for pretty near a wk. and promising every day that I could have it tomorrow they finely give it to me yesterday and give me a bill for $7.50. So I says I would settle the 1st of next month and I got in and drove her out to see how she run a minute and it was such a nice day that I says why shouldent I drive down town and so I started and got along fine and of coarse I was a little shakey going in the loop the 1st. time but I was O. K. till I got to 5th ave. and Washington st. and then 1 of the traffic men hollered at me. I was Jerry Donahue. So I says Hello Jerry and kept on going but he hollered for me to stop and when I stopped I was right in the middle of the car tracks. So he come up to the side of the car and then he sees who I was and I says whats the matter with you stopping a old pal and he says I dident know you at 1st. but I jest noticed you was driveing without no license. Well Charley that was the 1st time I thought about a lisence. So I told Jerry Id forgot about it, and he says You better get 1 or all the boys will be stopping you so he says your blocking up the traffic so beat it. So then I found out all of a sudden that my engine wasent runing and it had died on me and I stuck my ft. on the starter peddle and Id got to stick the gear in neutruls and the min. the engine started I shot ahead and run right at a crowd of people that was crossing the st. Well I felt for my horn and it dident make no sound and I thought it was good night but Jerry seen what was going to happen and yelled to the people to duck so I jest missed them and by the time I got to LaSalle st. I had her under controls.

Well Charley I finely managed to get to headquarters and all the boys come out and overlooked the car and I offered to give them a ride but it seems like Jerry the big fool had called them up and told them what happened over to 5th ave. and they all pretended like they was scarred to ride with me.

Well Charley wile I was up in the office 1 of them dirty bums out of spite work for me calling them a cheap skate come down and let the wind out of 1 of the back end tires and I dident never know it till I was clear out here and run the car in to the garrage. You ought to seen the rim on the wheel Charley and the hole wheels pretty near a wreck and the man says they isent only 1 thing to do and thats get a hole new wheel and a new tire because the tires cut all to peaces. Hows that for a fine trick Charley.

The man at the garrage says he dident see how I could drive all the way out here and not know they was some thing wrong and wile he was talking the car begin to smoke and flames begin shooting out the front part and I thought for a minute the hole place was going to explode but the man had the fire out all most as soon as it started. So I says I got a fine bunch of friends that leave me come home on flat tire and then try to burn me up. So the man says your friends may of give you the flat tire but the reason you was going to burn up was on acct. of they not being no water to keep the engine cool. So I says did they leave the water out to. So he says when did you put some in and I told him I hadent never put none in. So then he laughed till I thought he was going to choke and I wisht he had. This A. M. I been pouring water in my radiater all A. M. but I cant get the old engine to cool off.

Regards to Mary.

Your Bro. FRED GROSS.

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Allison, Ill. March 18.

BRO. CHARLEY: Well, Charley, sence the last letter I wrote you about all I been doing is borring money and paying it out and the garrage that I ordered built is going to cost pretty near $200.00 dollars but I couldent get 1 for no less and the Swift peoples going to soak me for a new wheel and a new tire and the garrage says I owe them $30.00 and it would be some satisfaction if I could fine out who done that dirty trick about leaving the wind out of the tire and I would brake them in 2 but the boys down to headquarters jest laughs like it was a good joke and wont squeal on who ever done it.

An other thing I had to pay for was the lisence and its costing me $3.00 for a lisence to own a car that I aint hardley seen let alone get any pleasure out of it.

The Swift people called up today and says I could come and get the car tomorrow. Grace aint had no ride in it yet so any way if the cars ready tomorrow I will go and get it and give Grace and the kids a ride before some thing else happens but I guess its pretty near time for the luck to brake the other way hay Charley. Thats what I told a fellow today that come in and tride to sell me some insurence. What kind of insurence I ast him. He says automobile insurence. No I says my cars cost me enough all ready with out it costing me no more. So he says its libel to cost you a hole lot more before you threw if you dont have no insurence. He says its libel to burn up or run in to some body and kill them or some bodys libel to help themself to it when its laying in the st. Yes I says theyd be libel to steal a car that bellonged to 1 of the detective bureau. So he says No probily not because it would be like stealing pennys from a blind man. But anyway he says the fire insurence and libility insurence would cost $40.00 dollars per annum and $40.00 dollar bills is jest as plenty a round me these days is whiskers on a flute.

Well Charley give our kindest to Mary and I hope lucks been better with you then I.

Your Bro. F. A. GROSS.

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Allison Ill. March 22

BROTHER CHARLEY. Well Charley I wont write you no more letters about my car Charley because I got no car and who evers got it can keep it. And Im tickled to death that they dident get it till Grace and the kids had 1 ride and they dident only ride about 4 or 5 miles but long enough to say they road in their own car any way.

Well Charley I will tell you what come off. In the first place the car wasen't ready the day the Swift people says it would be ready, but it was finely ready yesterday and I went out there early in the P. M. and got it.

So it was the first day of spring and the finest day I ever seen for March. It felt like June and the sky dident have no sine of a cloud in them.

I called up Grace before I got there and told her to fix it so as her and the kids could go when I come for them and I got out there about 4 a clock and then by that time they was a few clouds in the sky and I says some thing about may be we better postpone the trip. But Grace says Not much you don't do no more postponeing. So they come out and got in and I set alone in front and Grace and the kids behind and away we went.

Well Charley we was jest turning in to Ogden ave. tords town when I felt a rain drop and I hadent went more than 3 blks. after I felt the 1st splash when she begin to beat it down a mile a minute. Well I stopped the car and jumped out and tride to get the top up and I couldent lugg some of the straps and levvers that was holding it down. So I give up trying to fix the top and looked to both sides of the st. and it was raining so hard I couldent see nothing but finely I grabbed the kids and run tords 1 side of the st. and Grace after me and as luck would have it we ran right into a lunch room.

So, they was a couple wommen setting in there the props wife and an other and between them and I and Grace we got some of the kids soked things off and the props wife dug up a couple blankets some wheres and rapped the kids up and then Grace begin howling about how near drownded she was and I thought I'd be better off in the storm then listening to she howling so I blowed out again and the rain had let up a little but jest enought so as I could see acrost the st. Well Charley the car wasent nowheres. They wasent no body a round no wagons or no st. cars or nothing.

Well Charley they wasent nothing to do but brake the news to Grace and she got hystericks and the kids was pretty near as bad. Well any way Charley when it stopped raining and the kids cloths wasent so wet no more we went home on the st. car and dident only half to transfer twice.

Its been over 24 hrs. sence the car was stole and not a word about it from no wheres and they tell me theys so many Swift Six been sold in Chi that it aint nothing but luck when you identify witch is yourn.

So Grace is upstairs giveing the kids some hot baths and I been setting in the pianos rm. figgureing out now much that there car cost all together and I got it figured where it stands me $849.00 and that includs the garrage I'm building and the storage and the repairs and gasoline and lisence and robes and etc.

A fine investment that was hay Charley and I guess Grace will know enough next time to try and save her money and not go splurging on pianos and cars and stuff that they cant nobody aford unlest there millionares.

Kindest to both of you.

Your Bro. F. A. GROSS.

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Allison, Ill., May 22.

BRO. CHARLEY. Jest a line Charley to leave you know wear getting a long O. K. and not starveing to death.

Theys an other interest day on our mortgage comeing the 1st. of July and how wear going to meet it I dont know but we will meet it some way because we cant aford to loose our propetty now because its more valuable then ever on acct. of there being nice garrage in the back yard.

Well Charley I bet youll be surprised to hear that Im a piano player

"THE CAR WASN'T ANYWHERES."

now and I picked it up myself without nobody showing me nothing and I got so now I can sing a couple songs and company myself with cords and of coarse I cant play the hard cords yet.

Theys a hole lot of things Charley that makes a piano better than an automobile and 1 thing is that you can leave all the keys on the piano and go in a lunch room and they wont nobody steal the piano and you can put your ft. down as hard is you want to on the peddle with out unchargeing no baterys and you dont half to buy no license for it and dont half to buy new tires for it and you can leave it any wheres all night and it will start up next A. M. and you dont half to pour water in them all the wile to keep them from catching on fire and they dont take no gasoline or they dont get stalled in the middle of a st. car track.

And you dont half to build no new garrage to keep them in because theys plenty of rm. for them right in the house.

Kindest to both you and Mary.

Your. Bro. F. A. GROSS.

THE MIRRORS OF DOWNING STREET

SOME POLITICAL REFLECTIONS

BY "A GENTLEMAN WITH A DUSTER."

Lord Northcliffe

Lord Northcliffe, first viscount (Alfred Charles William Harmsworth). Born, 1865, in Dublin. Education: In trade schools; trained as a book seller, and worked in the establishment of George Newnes; LL. D., Rochester University, United States of America. Proprietor of the London Times, Daily Mail and a number of other journals. Viscount, 1917. Chairman of the British war mission to the United States, 1917. Director of propaganda in enemy countries, 1918.

A GREAT surgeon tells me he has no doubt that Cariyle suffered all his life from a duodenal ulcer. "One may speculate," he says, "on the difference there would have been in his writings if he had undergone the operation which today is quite common."

This remark occurs to me when I think about Lord Northcliffe.

There is something wrong with his health. For a reason he is almost boyish in high spirits, not only a charming and considerate host, but a spirit animated by the kindliest, broadest and cheerfulest sympathies. Then comes a period of darkness. He seems to imagine that he may go blind, declares that he cannot eat this and that, shuts himself up from his friends, and feels the button of the world pressing on his soul.

It is impossible to judge him as one would judge a perfectly healthy man.

The most conspicuous thing in his character is its transilience. One is aware in him of an anacoluthic quality as if his mind suddenly stopped leaping in one direction to begin jumping in a quite contrary direction. It cannot be said that his mind works in any direction. It is not a trained mind. It does not know how to think and cannot support the burden of trying to think. It springs at ideas and goes off with them in haste too great for reflection. He drops those ideas when he sees an excuse for another leap. Sequence to Lord Northcliffe is a synonym for monotony. He has no esprit de suite. But he has leaps of real genius. An admirable title for his biography would be, "The Fits and Starts of a Discontinuous Soul." There is something of St. Vitus in his psychology. You might call him the Spring-Heeled Jack of Journalism.

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A STORY told of one of his journalists illustrates the difficulty of dealing with so uncertain a person. Lord Northcliffe invited this journalist—let us call him Mr. H.—to luncheon. They approached the lift of Carmelite House, and Lord Northcliffe drew back to let his guest enter before him—he has excellent manners, and, when he is a host, is scrupulously polite to the least of people in his employment. Mr. H. approached the lift, and, raising his hat and making a profound bow to the boy in charge of it, passed in before Lord Northcliffe. Nothing was said during the descent. On leaving the lift Mr. H. again raised his hat and bowed low to the boy. When they were out of earshot Lord Northcliffe remonstrated with him on his behavior. "You shouldn't joke," he said, "with these boys; it makes discipline difficult." "Joke!" exclaimed Mr. H., "good heavens, I wasn't joking; how do I know that tomorrow he will not be the editor of the Daily Mail?"

This story has a real importance. It emphasizes a remarkable characteristic of Lord Northcliffe's variability. It emphasizes the romantic quality of his mind. Nothing would please him more than to discover in one of his office boys an editor for the Times. His own life has given him almost a novelette's passion for romance. He lived in that atmosphere. Few men I have known are so free from snobbishness or so indifferent to the petty conventions of society. The dull life of the world is hateful to him. He would make not only the journalism of the suburbs sensational, he would make the history of mankind a fairy story.

It is difficult to understand his power in the world. He is not the great organizer that people suppose; all the organisation of his business has been done by Lord Rothermere, a very able man of business; nor is he the inspirational genius one is so often asked to believe. Kennedy Jones is largely responsible for the journalistic fortunes of Lord Northcliffe.

I am disposed to think that it is the romantic quality of his mind which is the source of his power. All the men about him are unimaginative realists. He is the artist in command of the commercial mind, the poet flogging dull words into a kind of wild music. Kennedy Jones could have started any of his papers, but he could never have imparted to them that living spirit of the unexpected which has kept them so effectually from dullness. Carmelite House could give the news of the world without Lord Northcliffe's help, but without his passion for the twists and turns of the fairy story it could never have presented that news so that it catches the attention of all classes.

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I HAVE never been conscious of greatness in Lord Northcliffe, but I have never failed to feel in his mind something unusual and remarkable. He is not an impressive person, but he is certainly an interesting person. One feels that he has preserved by some magic of temperament, not to be analyzed by the most skillful of psychologists, the spirit of boyhood. You may notice this spirit quite visibly in his face. The years leave few marks on his handsome countenance. He loves to frown and depress his lips before the camera, for, like a child, he loves to play at being somebody else, and somebody else with him is Napoleon. You are sure that he chose the title of Northcliffe so that he might sign his notes with the initial "N"—but when he is walking in a garden, dressed in white flannels, and looking as if he had just come from a Turkish bath, he has all the appearance of youth. It is a tragedy that a smile so agreeable should give way at times to a frown as black as midnight; that the freshness of his complexion should yield to an almost jaundiced yellow, and that the fun and frolic of the spirit should flee away so suddenly and for such long periods before the witch of melancholy.

LORD NORTHCLIFFE.

Of his part in the history of the world no historian will be able to speak with unqualified approval. His political purpose from beginning to end, I am entirely convinced, has been to serve what he conceives to be the highest interests of his country. I regard him in the matter of intention as one of the most honorable and courageous men of the day. But he is reckless in the means he employs to achieve his ends. I should say he has no moral scruples in a fight, none at all; I doubt very much if he asks himself if anything is right or wrong. I should say that he has only one question to ask of fate before he strips for a fight—is this thing going to be success or failure?

In many matters of great importance he has been right, so right that we are apt to forget the number of times he has been wrong. Whether he may not be charged in some measure at least with the guilt of the war, whether he is not responsible for the great bitterness of international feelings which characterized Europe during the last twenty years, is a question that must be left to the historian. But it is already apparent that for want of balance and a moral continuity in his direction of policy Lord Northcliffe has done nothing to elevate the public mind and much to degrade it.

He has jumped from sensation to sensation. The opportunity for a fight has pleased him more than the object of the fight has inspired him. He has never seen in the great body of English public opinion a spirit to be patiently and orderly educated toward noble ideals, but rather a herd to be stampeded of a sudden in the direction which he himself has as suddenly conceived to be the direction of success.

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THE true measure of his shortcomings may be taken by seeing how a man exercising such enormous power, power repeated day by day, and almost every hour of the day, might have prepared the way for disarmament and peace, might have made ostentation look like a crime, might have brought capital and labor into a sensible partnership, and might have given to the moral ideals of the noblest sons of men if not an intellectual impulse at least a convincing advertisement.

All the same, it is the greatest mistake for his enemies to declare that he is nothing better than a cynical egoist trading on the enormous ignorance of the English middle-classes. He is a boy, full of adventure, full of romance, and full of whims, seeing life as the finest fairy tale in the world, and enjoying every incident that comes his way, whether it be the bitterest and most cruel of fights or the opportunity of doing some one a romantic kindness.

You may see the boyishness of his nature in the devotion with which he threw himself first into bicycling, then into motoring, and then into flying. He loves machinery. He loves every game which involves physical risk and makes severe demands on courage. His love of England is not his love of her merchants and workmen, but his love of her masculine youth.

He has been generosity itself to his brothers, with all of whom he does not, unfortunately, get on as well as one could wish. The most beautiful thing in his life is the love he cherishes for his mother, and nothing delights him so much as taking away her breath by an act of astonishing devotion. A man so generous and so boyish may make grave mistakes, but he cannot be a deliberately bad man.

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Strange Moon Rays.

PUISEUX, the distinguished selenographer of the Paris observatory, some time ago reached the conclusion that the curious rays or bands extending in straight lines away from many lunar craters, such as the celebrated tycho, are produced by the deposition of volcanic ashes carried to great distances by the winds that happened to prevail when the eruption occurred.

He accounts for the relative narrowness of these bands, which are never more than thirty miles broad, although their length is sometimes many hundred miles, by supposing that only the central axis of the deposit has remained, the less dense borders having been destroyed by the grinding forces of the air when the moon had a considerable atmosphere.

Chinese Fossil Teeth.

AN European investigator has made a singular collection of fossil teeth from drug stores in various parts of China, where they are sold under the name of dragons' teeth and are valued for their supposed curative powers.

Upon examining them it was found by this investigator that they are the remains of many species of extinct animals, such as the ancestral forms of camels, saber-toothed tigers, three-toed horses and other creatures of ancient times, some of which, like the ancestral forms of camels and antelopes, were supposed to have had their original home in America and in Africa. Judging from the quantities of these teeth sold, the investigator thinks they must exist in enormous numbers in some parts of China.

Tides in the Stars.

SOME time ago it was reported by a distinguished astronomer that the star called Xi Geminorum, which has long been known as a variable, is in reality double, but its two components are so close that no telescope is able to separate them, and their existence is proved by the shifting lines in the spectrum. The variations in brightness, it is thought, can only be due to the attraction between the two stars raising immense tides in their molten or vaporous globes, which, through the efforts of compression or otherwise, displace the spectral lines.

Numbers That People Prefer.

THERE has been announced in France the result of a curious investigation concerning the "preferred numbers" of the inhabitants of different countries. The basis of the investigation is a study of the various denominations of money, postage stamps and other measures.

It appears that nearly all races show a marked preference for the numbers "two," "three" and "five," their multiples. But the Mohammedans avoid the number "three." Neither in Turkey nor in Persia, it appears, does one find a trace of this number, and it is scarcely found in Egypt.

Among the French and other Latin peoples "two" and "five" are more popular than "three," while the English prefer "two" and three and the German "three" and "five."

The Chinese resemble the Latin race in their choice, while the people of India have a strong liking for "two." The number "seven" is most used in Russia and other Slavic countries. The higher numbers are not much used except in Spanish countries, as "eleven" in Salvador, "seventeen" in Mexico, "nineteen" in Spain, and "thirty-one" in Guatemala. The people of Hawaii are said to be quite fond of "thirteen."

Salmon With White Flesh

THE largest, best-known and most valuable salmon is the Chinook, found from Ventura bay in California to Morton sound in Alaska, and on the Asiatic coast from northern China to the Arctic. In the spring the body of this fish is silver, and on the back and on the dorsal fin and tail are black spots which are nearly round. In the fall the color of the fish turns to dark red. The average weight of these fish is about twenty-two pounds, but individuals weighing one hundred pounds are sometimes taken. In some waters the flesh of the Chinook salmon is "salmon red," but in southeast Alaska, Puget sound and British Columbia a large percentage of them, estimated at one-third, have white flesh. The fish authorities say that no reasonable explanation of this phenomenon has been given.